

WHITE POND DR. – FRANK BLVD. URBAN RENEWAL PLAN
November 2006

I. Location of the White Pond Dr. – Frank Blvd. Urban Renewal Area

The White Pond Dr. – Frank Blvd. Urban Renewal Area is located in the northwestern portion of City of Akron, County of Summit, State of Ohio as shown on Map 1. The area is generally bounded by Frank Blvd. on the north, White Pond Drive on the east, the side and rear lot lines of office and residential properties fronting White Pond Drive on the south, and Interstate 77 on the west, as more fully shown on Map 2 and as described in Exhibit A. The Renewal Area consists of approximately 89.75 acres.

II. Statement of Development Objectives to be Achieved by the Project

The goals of the City of Akron in undertaking this project are: 1) to eliminate blight and to prevent recurrence of blight; 2) to provide for new office park development; and 3) to preserve and increase employment and the economic base of the City of Akron. Specific objectives are proposed to guide and direct urban renewal activities and redevelopment.

To carry out the project goals, the following specific objectives are proposed:

A. Land Use Objective

Enhance the viability of the White Pond – Frank Blvd. Urban Renewal Area by encouraging compatible land uses within the project area and removing incompatible land uses:

1. Remove blighted properties of the White Pond – Frank Blvd. Renewal Area that are deteriorated, blighted, or a threat to the public health, safety and general welfare;
2. Provide a redevelopment site suitable for office park activities and compatible business uses;
3. Prohibit incompatible uses from locating in the project area and promote harmonious land use relationships between properties.

B. Environmental Objective

Develop an attractive and visually improved environment within the Renewal Area:

1. Remove properties that are poorly maintained or deteriorated, attract nuisance activities and are detrimental to the health, safety and welfare of the general public and persons who pass through the area.
2. Implement redevelopment that will prevent blighted conditions from recurring which are harmful to persons within, adjacent to, and who pass through the renewal area.
3. Develop attractive, well-landscaped and lighted facilities that improve the appearance of the renewal area.
4. Clean up and improve the rights-of-way along White Pond Drive and Frank Blvd.
5. Develop storm water retention facilities on site as amenities that enhance the overall attractiveness of the development.

C. Public Improvements Objective

Upgrade public infrastructure within the White Pond – Frank area to support proposed redevelopment uses

1. Schedule and construct public improvements as necessary to street surfaces, sidewalks, curbs, and gutters as part of the City's capital investment and community development program.

D. Circulation Objective

Improve safety and reduce conflicts among all circulation modes and routes, including vehicular, railroad, commercial, and pedestrian traffic.

1. Ensure safe and proper ingress and egress for the redevelopment site via White Pond Drive and/ or Frank Blvd.
2. Evaluate the intersection of White Pond Drive and Frank Blvd. for potential safety and traffic flow improvements.
3. Provide for sidewalks along White Pond Drive for safe pedestrian traffic.
4. Create a pedestrian circulation system through and around the development to enhance connectivity and provide a recreational amenity.

E. Economic Objective

Facilitate new office park development and compatible business uses in the project area to improve the local economy and provide new job opportunities.

1. Remove blighting conditions and thereby encourage investor interest and confidence in the White Pond – Frank Renewal Area.
2. Encourage and attract significant private reinvestment in the project area.
3. Provide for office park redevelopment and compatible business uses that will enhance the city's economic base and employment opportunities to local city residents.

III. Types of Proposed Renewal Actions

Proposed renewal actions to be carried out by the City following adoption of the renewal plan may include acquisition and clearance of property, the sale or lease of land for redevelopment, construction of supporting infrastructure, vacation of rights-of-way, and additional actions as necessary to support new office park or other related business activity. Redevelopment sites controlled by the City are to be acquired by agreements with the City setting forth permitted uses, use restrictions and development requirements. The sale or lease of City owned property, and the terms of the associated development agreements, requires review by the City Planning Commission and approval of Akron City Council.

IV. Land Use Plan

A. Land Use

1. Existing Land Use

Existing land uses within the Renewal Area are a limestone gravel operation, a railroad, one single-family residential dwelling, and undeveloped open space that includes several large water-filled ponds. Land uses surrounding the Renewal Area include a mix of office and residential uses on White Pond Drive and mixed residential use, office, and municipal open space on Frank Blvd. Map 3 indicates existing zoning.

2. Proposed Land Use

In order to achieve the objectives of this Urban Renewal Plan, the proposed land use within the White Pond – Frank Blvd. Renewal Area shall correspond with the proposed zoning for the area to permit office use. Complementary uses may be considered on a Conditional Use basis. Map 4 indicates proposed land use.

B. Zoning

1. Existing Zoning

The existing zoning for the White Pond – Frank Blvd. Renewal Area is Class UPD-30 District, which permits a mix of residential and specific commercial uses. Permitted residential uses are Single-Family, Two-Family, Townhouse Apartment, Garden-Type Apartment, and Mid-Rise Apartment. The storage in bulk of limestone and aggregate, including sale and delivery from the premises, is also permitted. Map 5 indicates existing zoning.

2. Proposed Zoning

The Renewal Area is proposed to be rezoned for office use as permitted under Section 153.270 (Class ULB / Limited Business) of the Akron Zoning Code. Complementary uses may be considered on a Conditional Use basis. Map 6 indicates the proposed zoning.

C. Additional Development Standards and Regulations

All site, building and signage plans shall be reviewed by the Urban Design and Historic Preservation Commission and require approval by the City Planning Commission.

In addition to complying with the development standards and regulations set forth in the Akron Zoning Code, new development in the White Pond – Frank Blvd. Renewal Area shall comply with the following:

1. Parking Facilities

The design, layout and access to off-street parking shall be reviewed and approved by the City. All parking and service areas shall be paved with a hard surface material, curbed and

landscape screened. A landscaped buffer area of 15 feet minimum shall be maintained between parking areas and the perimeter of the property. A landscaped buffer of five (5) feet minimum shall be maintained between parking areas and any streets developed within the Renewal Area.

2. Outdoor Advertising Displays

No billboards or outdoor advertising displays of any nature shall be placed, erected or located in the Renewal Area.

3. On-Premise Exterior Signs

The following guidelines shall apply to all exterior signage in the Renewal Area:

- a. Building-mounted signage and ground-mounted signage shall be for business identification only. If multiple businesses are on the site, the sign shall be for project identification only.
- b. Pole signs are prohibited.
- c. All signage materials shall be compatible with building materials and colors.
- d. Mechanically moving signage or flashing lights shall be prohibited.
- e. A sign may not project above the roof of a structure to which it is affixed.
- f. Any new signs or replacement signs shall be reviewed by the Urban Design and Historic Preservation Commission and approved by the City Planning Commission.

4. Utilities

All private utilities will be placed underground.

5. Building Design

Construction of any new buildings within the Renewal Area shall be reviewed by the Urban Design and Historic

Preservation Commission and approved by the City Planning Commission.

6. Building Materials

All or a majority of building facade materials shall be split face block or brick masonry and shall be subject to City approval.

7. Positioning of Primary Buildings

The main office buildings shall be located to be easily visible from White Pond Drive, Frank Boulevard, or Interstate 77. Building service areas should not be visible from public streets.

8. On Site Trash Storage

On site trash materials shall be stored in a structure or structures that match the facade materials of the primary buildings. These are to be placed behind the building out of sight from the public streets.

9. Access

Vehicular ingress and egress to buildings and parking areas shall be approved by the City Traffic Engineer. Primary access shall be from White Pond Drive with secondary access permitted from Frank Boulevard. Multiple buildings should be served by a common access point.

10. Exterior Lighting

All public exterior areas shall be well lighted. Lighting should be adequate and suitable for the intended use, but shall not be sited or of such a nature as to be intrusive to surrounding areas.

11. Landscaping

All new development plans shall include a landscape plan that shall be subject to approval by the Akron Department of Planning and Urban Development. Parking areas shall be landscape screened to be consistent with new development.

12. Storm Water Management

The developer shall submit a storm water management plan to control the run-off, siltation and sedimentation during construction and to control the run-off after the development is completed. Said plan shall be consistent with all the requirements of Section 192.101-114 of the Code of Ordinances, shall be submitted prior to the issuance of any building permits and is subject to the approval of the Akron Bureau of Engineering.

On-site retention ponds shall be developed as site amenities.

13. Fencing

Any fencing should be attractive and well maintained. If chain link fence is used, it should be vinyl coated. The use of security razor wire or barbed wire is prohibited.

V. Project Proposals

A. Land Acquisition

1. Identification of Real Property to be Acquired

Real property to be acquired to meet development objectives is identified on Map 7.

2. Conditions under which Properties Not Identified to be Acquired may be Acquired

Properties that are severely deteriorated (substandard or major deterioration) may be acquired in order to remove conditions of blight that constitute a threat to public health, safety and welfare in the area. Properties that are not substandard or in a state of major deterioration may be acquired when necessary for public improvements, or when their acquisition is necessary to carry out the development goals of the plan, and to permit proper and orderly development in the Renewal Area.

3. Conditions under which Properties to be Acquired may not be Acquired

As properties are identified for acquisition, such properties may not be acquired if it is determined that an acceptable alternative shall achieve the objectives of the plan.

B. Rehabilitation and Conservation

There are no structures designated for rehabilitation. Rehabilitation of buildings and properties may be undertaken if determined to further the objectives of the renewal plan.

C. Redeveloper's Obligations

Redevelopment within the White Pond – Frank Renewal Area on land to be acquired by the City shall be restricted by a Lease Agreement or Development Agreement executed by the City and the Redeveloper. Said Agreement and project reviews and approval shall apply to all of the Redeveloper's contiguous property within the Renewal Area. The Agreement shall include the following provisions:

1. The Redeveloper shall submit site plans and building plans to the Akron Department of Planning and Urban Development. Said plans shall be reviewed by the Urban Design and Historic and approved by the City Planning Commission prior to commencement of construction to determine compliance of such plans with the Renewal Plan. It is expressly understood that approval of any plans by the City of Akron applies to any and all features shown thereon, and that any subsequent additions, deletions, or other modifications thereof are required to be submitted by the Redeveloper for City approval before construction of such revisions may begin.
2. The Redeveloper shall commence new construction on land acquired by the City and conveyed to the Redeveloper within six (6) months after conveyance.
3. The Redeveloper shall agree that no covenant, agreement, lease conveyance or other instrument relating to the property shall be effected or executed on the basis of race, creed, color, sex or national origin in the sale, lease, use or occupancy thereof.
4. The Redeveloper shall maintain the structure and facilities in accordance with all codes and ordinances of the City of Akron.

VI. Other Provisions

A. Relationship to Local Objectives

The Urban Renewal Plan proposals are based on planning objectives for the City of Akron as expressed in the General plan and Workable Program of the City. The Renewal Plan provides for the redevelopment of the project area in a manner that will promote the public health, safety, morals and welfare.

The acquisition and elimination of blighted conditions and the prevention of recurrence of blight will benefit the general public and the business and property owners adjacent to the Renewal Area.

The land use proposals of the Renewal Plan will provide for development of office facilities and parking.

B. Relocation Plan

Should action by the City result in the need to displace residents or businesses, the relocation of displaced parties shall be carried out in conformance with the City of Akron Relocation Plan and Activity Program.

C. Duration of the Renewal Plan Restrictions

The Renewal Plan and/ or modification thereof shall be in force and effect for a period of 40 years from the date of Plan approval by the City of Akron. The termination of the Renewal Plan shall in no way permit the project land or any part thereof to be restricted on the basis of race, creed, color, sex or national origin.

D. Provisions for Amending Approved Plan

This Renewal Plan may be amended from time to time upon approval by the City Planning Commission and City Council.

VII. Legislation to be Utilized to Fulfill Plan Objectives

A. Ohio Revised Code: Urban Redevelopment Tax Increment Equivalent (Section 5709.41 to 5709.43)

Tax increment financing, as permitted by provisions of the above statutes, will assist the City in paying for the improvements that will be undertaken within the White Pond – Frank Blvd. Renewal Area and other public improvements necessary to accomplish the goals of the City's General Plan. Sections 5709.41 to 5709.43 permit the City to declare that improvements made on real property owned by the City and sold or leased to a developer to be a "public purpose" and exempt from real property taxation for up to 30 years. The City may thereafter require the owner of any structure constructed on the parcel to make annual service payments to the City in-lieu-of taxes. Chapter 725 permits the City to exempt from real property taxation the portion of the assessed valuation of improvements constructed pursuant to a development agreement. The City may thereafter require the owner of the improvements constructed on the parcel to make annual service payments to the City in-lieu-of taxes.